

Lafreniere Homestead Sale Parcel

Camel's Hump State Park
Bolton, VT

Bid Information and Requirements

INTRODUCTION

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services are requesting bid proposals for the purchase of the so-called 30 acre Lafreniere Sale property at Camel's Hump State Park in Bolton, VT.

The former Lafreniere property is located in Camel's Hump State Park on the southwest corner of Duxbury and Honey Hollow Roads in the Town of Bolton, Vermont. The property includes approximately 25 acres of woodlands, several acres of open meadow, and an early 19th century farmhouse. The farmhouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites and though structurally sound, is in need of extensive repairs. The property will be sold subject to restrictions that would prohibit further subdivision and development of the property and protect the open space and historic character of the property.

The property will be open for inspection by potential bidders on **September 1, 2015 from 10:00 A.M. through Noon**. Bidders are not required to attend the site inspection in order to submit a bid proposal but are **STRONGLY** encouraged to do so. The site inspection will provide bidders with an important opportunity to inspect the house and seek clarification from the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Department of Buildings and General Services, and the Division for Historic Preservation staff who will be on site.

The deadline for submittal of proposals to the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services is 4:00 P.M. on **September 30, 2015**. Please note: **Proposals must be received by the department by the above date – not simply postmarked by this date**. Proposals, as well as requests for additional information and questions should be addressed to:

Allen Palmer
Division of Property Management
VT Department of Buildings and General Services
4 Governor Aiken Avenue
Montpelier, VT 05633-7001
allen.palmer@state.vt.us

BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

The Preston-Lafreniere property is part of the 20,000+ acre Camel's Hump State Park and is located in the Town of Bolton in southeastern Chittenden County, the most heavily populated county of the state. The surrounding land use is primarily undeveloped forest and dispersed recreation. A visitor parking area to access hiking trails and state forest highways is located near the property on state park land. In addition, there are occupied private residences along both roads on which the property is located.

Nestled in the Winooski River Valley, the homestead offers striking mountain views in a bucolic setting. With the forested slopes of Camel's Hump mountain (4083 feet) rising in the backyard, the front looks out over the Winooski River and toward the Green Mountains in the distance. The yard around the two-story frame house features mature trees as well as several large lilac, hydrangea, and rose bushes.

The property is bounded by two public roads. Duxbury Road runs east-west and serves as the property's northern boundary. Honey Hollow Road runs north-south and serves as the property's eastern boundary. The driveway is immediately on the right after turning onto Honey Hollow Road from Duxbury Road (southwest corner). (There are three barns located on the North side of Duxbury Road, opposite the house which are being retained in state ownership and are not within the sale parcel).

The house is believed to be one of the oldest in Bolton. The original wide-plank wood flooring remains intact throughout much of the house. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 and also is listed on the Vermont State Register of Historic Places.

Five generations of the Preston family lived and worked on the property, from the time John Preston purchased it in the 1790s until Bertha Preston-Lafreniere died in 1984. The roughly 460 acres of the entire Preston-Lafreniere property were acquired by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation in 1991 as an addition to Camel's Hump State Park through a grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Since 1991, minimal maintenance has occurred on the farmhouse and it now requires extensive rehabilitation, including septic, water, heating, electrical, and plumbing upgrades.

Supplemental information regarding this property including location and site maps, proposed deed restrictions, property appraisal, historical background information on the house including floor plans, engineer's assessment of house and cost estimates for needed repairs, and state and local permits are attached by reference and are available via the Department of Buildings and General Services, Division of Property Management website.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the State is to provide for the proper stewardship of the Lafreniere house through the sale of this property to a private owner with demonstrated interest and capacity to renovate the house and use the property for purposes consistent with its historic past and surrounding land uses.

The State's goals are:

1. Solicit bid proposals from interested parties for the purchase of this property.
2. Select the bidder that best meets the State's needs.

BIDDER INFORMATION

Given the historic nature of the property, any major proposed repairs or improvements to the house must comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and must be coordinated with and approved by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation before being implemented.

The house likely contains lead paint and possibly asbestos. Bidders should consider these possibilities in their proposals. The existing septic and water supply systems on the property are no longer usable. The State has developed a septic design and has secured a Water Supply/Waste Water permit for the sale parcel. These facilities will not be constructed by the State and will be the responsibility of the new owner to develop.

The Lafreniere Sale Parcel is within land currently zoned as "Conservation District" by the Town of Bolton. Residential uses are not typically an allowed use within Conservation District lands. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation has obtained Subdivision Approval for the sale parcel and Conditional Use Approval for an adaptive re-use of an historic structure for single family residential purposes through the Bolton Development Review Board. Conditional Use Approval allows the house to be used for residential purposes.

Bid proposals should include the following components:

1. Bid Price – The property's appraised value is \$126,000. A minimum bid of \$80,000 has been established for this property. Bid price will be a primary consideration in awarding the winning bid. Sale proceeds will be used by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to cover costs and to conduct additional stabilization measures on the historic barns located across the road from the Lafreniere farmhouse which are being retained in state ownership (see number 3 below for additional information).
2. Summary Statement of Plans for Renovating the House and Using the Property – Bid proposals should include a brief statement that summarizes the bidder's proposed plans for the property and making needed repairs and renovations to the farmhouse. This Summary Statement will be a consideration in awarding the bid.

3. Interest in Using Barns and Agricultural Fields on North Side of Duxbury Road – The barns and agricultural land on the north side of Duxbury Road directly across from the Lafreniere farmhouse are **not** for sale and will remain in State ownership. The State has recently completed initial stabilization work on the East barn and plans to use the proceeds from the sale of this parcel to conduct additional stabilization work on the West barn in the near future. The agricultural fields adjacent to these barns are currently under an active agricultural license. This license will terminate on 12/31/2019, at which time the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation will seek new proposals from interested parties for using this farmland and barns for agricultural purposes. To assist the State in planning for the future use of this property, bidders are being asked to indicate whether they may be interested in submitting a proposal for the use of the agricultural fields and barns at this time. (An indication of interest to submit a proposal in the future does not constitute a commitment to do so, nor does an indicated lack of interest to submit a proposal at this time disqualify one from submitting a proposal in the future).

See below for additional bid instructions and requirements.

Open House

The Lafreniere Sale property will be open for inspection by potential bidders on Tuesday, September 1, from 10:00 A.M. through Noon. Staff from the Vermont Departments of Buildings and General Services and Forests, Parks and Recreation, and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation will be on site during this time to answer questions. While it is not mandatory that bidders attend this open house, they are **STRONGLY** encouraged to do so.

BIDDER INSTRUCTIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND PROPOSAL FORMAT

Potential bidders should carefully read the entire Bid Information and Requirements document and available supplemental information to gain a complete understanding of the various requirements. Bidders are also strongly encouraged to attend the site inspection opportunity as noted above.

All bid proposals must contain the following information and be presented in the following order:

1. **Letter of Intent** - The letter should be a succinct (one page) statement of intent that clearly summarizes the proposal. The letter should be signed by an authorized representative of the party making the proposal.
2. **Bid Price** – The current appraised value of the 30-acre sale parcel is \$126,000. A minimum bid of \$80,000 has been established for this property. While the property may not necessarily be sold to the highest bidder, bid price remains a primary consideration in awarding the bid.

3. **Summary Statement of Plans for Renovating the House and Using the Property** – The Summary Statement should generally describe the bidder’s plans for restoring, using, and maintaining the farmhouse including the major tasks to be undertaken. The statement should also outline the bidder’s proposed use of the property including the woodlot and open fields associated with the parcel. Bidders should address the following in their Summary Statement:

- (1) Short term repairs and improvements that will be done to the property.
- (2) Long term improvements to the property that are anticipated.
- (3) Proposed use of the property.

Summary Statements that successfully demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the property’s historic significance, a commitment and capacity to restoring the farmhouse in accord with all historic preservation requirements and using the property for purposes that complement the property’s historic past and surrounding land uses will be looked upon favorably and will factor into the State’s decision in awarding the winning bid.

4. **Future Interest in Use of Adjacent Barns and Agricultural Fields** – Indicate whether you may be interested in using the adjacent historic barns and agricultural fields for agricultural use after the current agricultural license expires, and if so, to what specific use(s) are you interested in. This information will assist the State in planning for this property and will not be used in selecting the winning bid for the sale parcel. An indication of interest to submit a proposal in the future does not constitute a commitment to do so, nor does an indicated lack of interest to submit a proposal at this time disqualify one from submitting a proposal in the future.
5. **Bidder Qualifications and Contact Information** – This section of the bid proposal should include basic information on the party submitting this proposal including the name, address, phone number, and email address of the primary contact person(s) for this proposal as well as more detailed information regarding the party’s specific qualifications, expertise, and/or financial capacity to carry out their plans for the property including any experience working on or rehabilitating historic structures.

The deadline for submission and receipt of proposals is September 30 at 4:00 P.M. Please note that proposals must be **received**, not just postmarked by the submission deadline. The State reserves the right to reject any proposals received after this time.

Additionally, the State reserves the right to reject any and all offers. In the event that the State and the “winning bidder” fail to execute a Purchase and Sales Agreement or if the parties fail to close on the property, the State reserves the right to award to the next complying bid or to void the entire bid process and place the subject property out to bid again.